

How quickly were decisions made?

Overall timeliness of decisions has remained stable

In 2022/23, 88% of decisions by agencies were made within the statutory timeframe (Figure 25). This result is consistent with 90% in 2021/22.

The number of applications decided after 35 days by agreement with the applicant, moderately declined from 9% in 2021/22 to 6% in 2022/23.

The rate of deemed refusals moderately increased from 1% in 2021/22 to 6% in 2022/23.

Timeliness has moderately increased across most sectors

In 2022/23 (Figure 26):

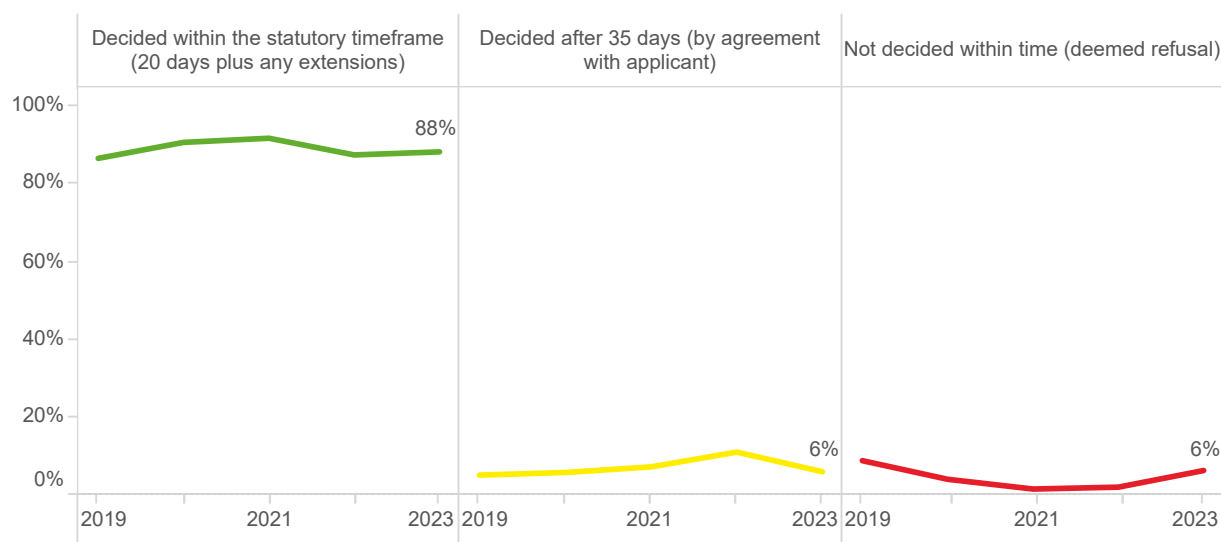
- The Government sector decided 88% of applications within the statutory timeframe, consistent with 90% reported in 2021/22.
- The Council sector decided 92% of applications within the statutory timeframe, an increase from 91% reported in 2021/22.
- The University sector decided 80% of applications within the statutory timeframe, a moderate increase from 67% reported in 2021/22.

- The Minister sector decided 0% of applications within the statutory timeframe. Data for the Minister sector has only been provided for the period commencing after the March 2023 State general election. As a result, this Report cannot provide analysis on the performance of the Minister sector as compared to previous years.
- The State-Owned Corporations sector decided 83% of applications within the statutory timeframe, a moderate increase from the 74% reported in the previous year.

Timeliness was maintained at high levels for the NSW Police Force, Department of Customer Service, Department of Education, and Transport for NSW. Most principal departments were consistent with the previous reporting period, however:

- the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment reported an increase in timeliness from 90% in 2021/22 to 95% in 2022/23;
- the Department of Communities and Justice reported a significant decline in timeliness from 52% in 2021/22 to 21% in 2022/23.

Figure 25: Applications that were decided within the statutory timeframe as a percentage of all applications decided, 2018/19 to 2022/23



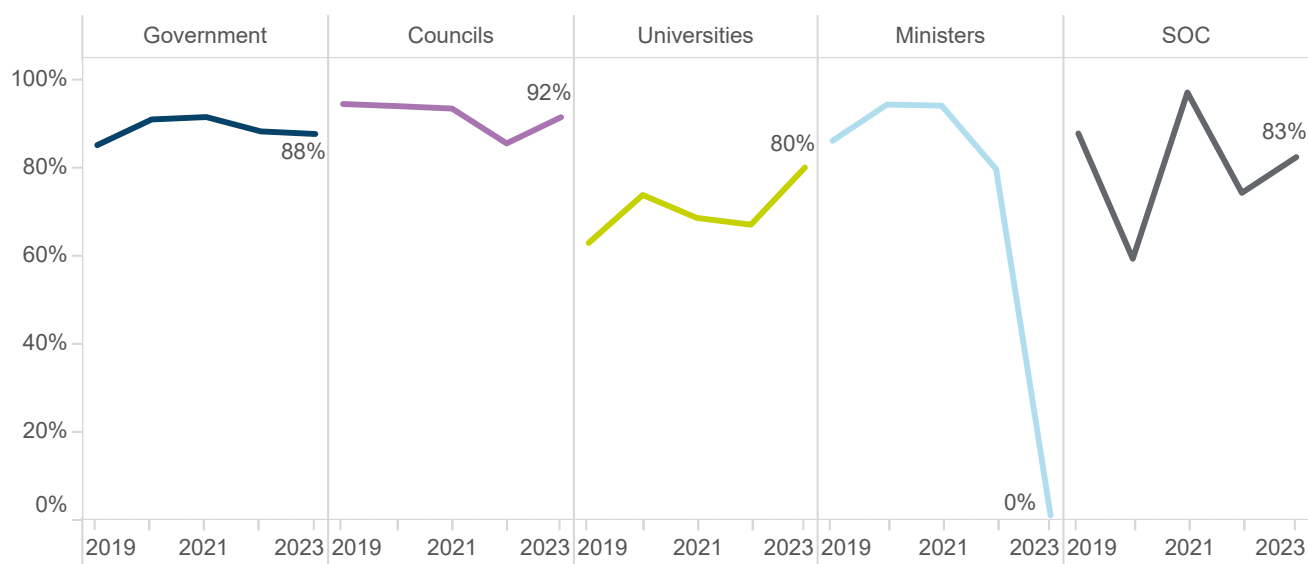
What are the statutory timeframes?

Agencies are required to report on timeliness against the three categories prescribed in Table F of the GIPA Regulation:

- Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)
- Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)
- Not decided within time (deemed refusal)

These reporting categories reflect the requirements of the GIPA Regulation. Importantly, the categories accommodate agencies' engagement with applicants and the agreement to extend time with consent. In the context of digital government and the availability of digital solutions for supporting access to information, any rise in extensions of time should be carefully considered by agencies to ensure their processes remain aligned to the transparency objectives of the GIPA Act.

Figure 26: Applications that were decided within the statutory timeframe, by sector, as a percentage of all applications decided, by sector, 2018/19 to 2022/23



Overall improvements in timeliness may reflect improved agency processes for dealing with applications. In particular, the implementation of electronic lodgement and automated management systems by some larger agencies may have generated efficiencies. Additionally, the review of business processes prior to the deployment of such new technology can facilitate process improvement.

Agencies struggling with timeliness should use the guidance issued by the IPC and the sound practice examples provided by other agencies to improve their own statutory timeframe compliance.

'How quickly were decisions made?' is reported and measured by the requirement for agencies to report on how quickly they dealt with access applications that they received. The data used in this section draws on Table F, Schedule 2 to the GIPA Regulation.